

JUSTICE COURT JUDGES



Judge
Darwin R. Poulsen
Alpine & Highland
Municipal Justice Court
(Utah County)

Judge Darwin R. Poulsen was raised on a farm in Idaho where he learned the value of hard work. After completing high school he graduated from Brigham Young University with a degree in Sociology and a minor in Business Management. He spent two years teaching school and then decided to go into Sales which he continued for 30 years. He received outstanding sales performance awards annually as a member of the President's Club. He was awarded a Certificate of Public Service Merit from the Utah Alcoholism Foundation and a Community Service Award from Highland City. He was appointed Judge of the Highland Justice Court in August 1990 and was certified by the Utah Judicial Council. Currently he serves as the Alpine Justice Court Judge and the Highland Justice Court Judge. Judge Poulsen is married and has four children and 17 grandchildren.

Judge Poulsen's compliance with performance standards is as follows:

- 1) Had fewer than the maximum allowable cases held under advisement.
- 2) Had at least 30 hours of continuing judicial education annually during his term.
- 3) Mentally and physically fit for office.
- 4) In substantial compliance with the Code of Judicial Conduct.



Judge
Stevan W. Ridge
Utah County Justice Court
(Utah County)

Judge Stevan W. Ridge is a Utah native born and raised in Utah County. He was educated at Utah State University in Logan, Utah and Weber State University in Ogden, Utah. He is a graduate of the Utah Law Enforcement Academy and the Utah Corrections Academy. He served as a professional law enforcement officer with the Wasatch County Sheriff's Department and the Utah Department of Corrections for a total of 23 years. Judge Ridge was appointed as Heber City Justice Court Judge on June 1, 2002 and was then appointed as Utah County Justice Court Judge in January of 2008. He has served a total of eight years on the bench. Judge Ridge has completed the Utah Judicial Institute training program and has served two terms as the Education Director for the Fourth District Justice Court Judges.

Judge Ridge's compliance with performance standards is as follows:

- 1) Had fewer than the maximum allowable cases held under advisement.
- 2) Had at least 30 hours of continuing judicial education annually during his term.
- 3) Mentally and physically fit for office.
- 4) In substantial compliance with the Code of Judicial Conduct.

The Utah Supreme Court has ordered one public reprimand of Judge Ridge since February 2007. On May 12, 2010, the Court publicly reprimanded Judge Ridge for altering a sentence, which created an appearance of impropriety in violation Canon 2 of the Code of Judicial Conduct.

Judge Ridge presided over a justice court bench trial at which the defendant was found guilty of a traffic violation. Judge Ridge imposed a modest fine as the sentence. When the defendant stated his intention to appeal, Judge Ridge announced he would change the sentence to the maximum penalty, which entailed a substantial fine and ninety days in jail. Judge Ridge's motivation for changing the sentence was to provide the district court with more sentencing discretion on appeal. The imposition of the augmented sentence created the appearance, and caused the defendant to believe, that Judge Ridge was punishing him for exercising his right to appeal.